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Iraq MH1

[For information on the topography, climate, agriculture and commercial crops, irrigation, stock raising, natural resources, production and supply, waterways, railways and roads of the valleys of the Tigris and Euphrates between the plateau of Asia Minor and the Persian Gulf discussed as one geographical unit rather than by political boundary, see M1 Middle East, Cat. 116, 21: Fisher, pp. 340-370.]

[For information on the topography, occupations and relative productivity of the desert plateau, and of the Arabian Peninsula as a whole, see M1 Middle East, cat. 116, 21: Fisher, pp. 427-449.]

1: Longrigg G-4, 5 (ca. 1915-1940) MH1 Iraq MH1

capital rendered abortive; and a successor enterprise in 1890 was no more fortunate. At the close of the century talk of the 'Baghdad Railway' was more than ever persistent since, from the year 1888, the Germans had begun their career of Eastern ambition. The completion by the 'Ottoman Company of Anatolian Railways' of its line to Ankara in 1893 was followed by its prolongation to Konia in 1896; and in the same year permission was obtained for an extension to Diyarbakr, and ultimately through 'Iraq. But immediate Russian objection was raised, the proposed alignment by Diyarbakr was abandoned, and a pause of two years followed. Thereafter the Kaiser paid the second of his visits to the Ottoman dominions, swore devotion to the Caliph and to Islam, and secured in 1899 the arrangement of a draft concession for a line from Konia to Mosul, Baghdad, and the Persian Gulf. A German envoy visited 'Iraq to report on routes, a German cruiser appeared in the Gulf, and a technical Commission in 1900 toured the probable alignment through 'Iraq to Kuwayt, where British suspicions were abruptly aroused. Meanwhile the diplomats of Turkey and Germany met to prepare a definitive convention, watched with interest from Whitehall and Delhi. The public of 'Iraq, far from these conclaves, had as yet seen no enterprise on steel rails more imposing than the Baghdad–Kadhimiya horse tramway, relic of Midhat Pasha.

The natural highways of 'Iraq had been, since the dawn of history, its great rivers, and on these the dozen types of sailing-boat and skiff, raft and coracle still plied. But since the eighteen-forties steam navigation on the rivers had played its part in 'Iraq economics. The Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company, formed in 1861 by the Lynch family and managed in Baghdad and Basra by companies bearing their name, had maintained a Tigris service for two generations, interrupted only by the obstructions of an officialdom dully resentful of foreign enterprise, by the low-water difficulties of navigation, and by the rifle-fire of riverain tribesmen. The Firman of authority, dating from 1834, seemed to limit the Company to simultaneous use of two steamers,[1] and the Lynch efforts were ceaseless for authority to increase this number and to employ barges. Their interests were, from 1879 onwards, closely associated with the British India Steam Navigation Company. Various Turkish or 'Iraqi single-ship enterprises had been amalgamated, a generation earlier, into a single 'Oman-Ottoman Administration', under the Turkish Ministry of Marine. Its fleet of small, barely river-worthy steamers took about half of the total

[1] The *City of London* launched in 1862 was lost in 1881, the *Dijla* launched in 1865 was lost in 1876. The *Blosse Lynch* (1878), *Khalifa* (1880), and *Mejidieh* (1882) were in service in 1900.

1: Longrigg G-4, 5 (ca. 1915-1940) MH1 Iraq MH1

505 traffic. One or two free-lance enterprises were additional to these —a Baṣra-owned steamer plying to Baghdad, another weekly from Baghdad to Samarrā; many abortive projects had been formed for larger development. The Saniya Administration had advanced plans, in 1890, for an extended service to include voyages to Mosul and even to Jazira-ibn-'Umar, and a new survey of the Euphrates was ordered in preparation for free navigation from Maskana or Jarablus to Baṣra. Nothing resulted from these projects, but the advancing shadow of the Baghdad Railway, with which their authors loved to connect them, gave encouragement. A ship-building yard was established at Baghdad in 1890.

304 The port of Baṣra, sole sea gateway of 'Iraq, carried by far the greatest part of its trade and traffic, of which in 1900 a negligible part was other than British or British-Indian. Russian and German trade was not yet established, while the 'Iraqis contributed little to the movements of the port. The Shaṭṭ al-'Arab waterway, thanks to survey and buoying by British hands, gave access and security to anchorages opposite the 'Ashar and Khandaq creeks which connected it with Baṣra city. The management of the port was primitive, quarantine and customs provisions inept, vexatious, and venal. No wharves, cranes, sheds or other port equipment were provided; loading and discharging overside to and from lighters in midstream were slow and costly operations.

206 Since the 'sixties of the century 'Iraq had had its place in the world's telegraphic system. It was connected through Fao with India, through Mosul and Jazira-ibn-'Umar with the rest of Turkey, through Khaniqin (or through Fao and Bushire) with Persia. The handling of traffic was slow and unreliable. But the extension of the system to most parts of 'Iraq, vulnerable and faltering as it was, and with Kurdish districts still unpenetrated, had yet done
205 much to assist administration and to modernize society. Postal services dated in some form from the eighteenth century. In the 'sixties of the nineteenth, British-Indian steamers began to carry the Indian and European mails to Baṣra, where the service connected with the river steamers. The Indian Post Offices opened in 1868. The British camel mail to Damascus, discontinued in 1886 after a century of service, was replaced by a Turkish mail along the same route, carried by 'Aniza tribal riders. The time-honoured horse-borne Tatar mail left Baghdad every Monday for Istanbul, by way of Mosul and Diyarbakr.

7. THE GOVERNMENT

631 The enormous difficulties of governing the three wilayas arose, it is now clear, from a complex of elements. The territory was ill provided with means of communication, and much of it was

1: Longrigg G-4, 5 (ca. 1915-1940) MH1 Iraq MH1

less a prospect of the completion of the railway, object of so many hopes and fears for twenty years.

Meissner Pasha, brilliant and dynamic, polished Orientalist and courtier, appeared in Baghdad in July 1911 and opened his offices in the house of Kadhim Pasha, destined but ten years later to accommodate the British High Commission and later Embassy. The site of the future railway station was selected on the right bank, and the first sod for the projected first section of the line, from Baghdad to Samarrā, was cut in the Wali's presence in July 1912. Difficulties of labour and of river transport, of docks and barges were somehow overcome. The hair of Meissner Pasha turned, as Lorimer reported, from black to white in three years of struggle; but forty-one miles of line to Sumayka were finished in May 1914, and eighty to Samarrā a few weeks after the declaration of war.

The history of river steam-navigation in this period is closely tied to that of the Railway. A clause in the Baghdad Railway Convention of 1903 alarmed both the Lynchs' Euphrates and Tigris Company and the Oman-Ottoman Administration by its threat of privileged competition; but it was never applied. In 1904 the Saniya Administration, for a derisory payment, took over from the Oman-Ottoman their whole fleet and equipment which included four passenger steamers—*Baghdadi*, *Furat*, *Rasafa*, *Mosul*—and a number of smaller craft. The Ḥamidiya Navigation Administration, now so named, proceeded next to bring into service two new and relatively palatial Scottish-built paddle-steamers, the *Ḥamidiya* and *Burhaniya*, which Oman-Ottoman had ordered three years before, and four new barges. It operated during its five years of life with a greater efficiency than its predecessor; an English visitor, indeed, pronounced it in 1908 'wonderfully well run', and prophesied its final displacement of the Lynch boats, unless the Railway should first displace both. The Lynch Company meanwhile strove continually for greater freedom of development, which was tenaciously withheld, though a third steamer was permitted to sail regularly after 1907. The difficulties of low-water Tigris navigation and the tribal insecurity above and below 'Amara at times stopped all traffic and distracted the Lynch managers, Mr. Parry and Mr. Tod. The *Julnar*, the most pretentious of their fleet, was acquired in 1908; the other Lynch steamers already time-honoured (*Blosse Lynch*, *Khalifa*, *Mejidieh*) continued in service under their tough veteran officers and Tall Kayfi crews. Free lances on the river—two Shi'i merchants and a head of the rich Khudhayri (Khedery) family—continued to take a share of the traffic, and schemes for further competition, such as that of an Anglo-Greek combine in 1905, were not infrequent. The Turkish revolution led to a retransfer of the Ḥamidiya Administration steamers from the

1: Longrigg G-4, 5 (ca. 1915-1940) MH1 Iraq MH1

505 Privy Purse to an organization of the central Government, the Ottoman River (Nahriya) Administration; but the service deteriorated in spite of new and important units acquired in 1912, the *Basra* and the *Baghdad*. Negotiations for a merger between Lynch and the Nahriya were persistent after 1909, but were long delayed by strong hostile outcry, both locally and in Istanbul, against such an example of foreign dominance, and were incomplete on the outbreak of war.

505 The subject, indeed, was among those covered by the never-
648* ratified Anglo-Turkish Agreement of May 1913. This provided that, in the interests of the steamers, no 'navigable streams' were to be diverted from their courses; navigation rights were to be awarded for sixty years to a new Ottoman River Navigation Company, to be formed upon a basis of equal participation by Turkish and British interests. A fourth steamer (but under the Turkish flag) was to be allowed to the Euphrates Company. But while this arrangement was acceptable to the Baghdad Railway Company, which guaranteed the new Company a high minimum of tonnage, the damage to Lynch interests was clear. This in turn was met by a further agreement of March 1914 which was to bring the Lynch interest itself into the Ottoman Navigation Company. The Railway's rights of port-construction at Basra were to be passed to an Ottoman Port Company with participation for each of Lynch, Lord Inchcape, and the British India interests, and the Baghdad Railway. World events, however, were to prevent any of these arrangements from coming into force; before the end of 1914 German and Turkish interest in Tigris steam navigation was for ever extinguished.

Meanwhile, the immediate task of moving the Baghdad Railway materials from Basra led to the formation in 1912 of an *ad hoc* company, the Société de Transports Fluviaux en Orient, with equal participation of the Lynch Company and the Deutsche Bank; it acquired suitable small craft for its purposes, and was controlled locally by the Euphrates and Tigris management.

312 In the all-important sphere of irrigation, the new century was to see great and promising developments. The year 1900 and succeeding years found, indeed, the same evils as ever flourishing unchecked: disastrous annual flooding, deficiency of irrigation water in the season of greatest need, lack of control, lack of drainage. The same helplessness of the unled and unrecognized cultivators, the same archaic methods, the same vague and abortive projects formed in high circles, continued to provide no practical cure. Conditions in the mid-Euphrates area turned from bad to worse, with lands abandoned, canals drying, and tribes fighting for existence. The Hindiya Barrage again partially collapsed in 1903

1: Longrigg G-4, 5 (ca. 1915-1940) MH1 Iraq MH1

The railways, when at their greatest
extent they were handed over by the Army in April 1920, consisted of nearly 1,000 miles of track.[1] The absorption into the 'Iraq economy of this rapidly constructed and ill-equipped system, with its decrepit engines and rolling-stock and an alignment designed to serve military purposes, was to be no easy task. The Director in 1919–20 was Colonel G. Lubbock. The labour which the Railway used was, at this stage, almost entirely Indian.

The financial procedures for handing over to a Civil Administration the capital works constructed from Army funds were the subject of a mission sent to 'Iraq under Sir John Hewitt; the assets were valued at £2 million, excluding the Railway, and had mostly taken forms unrelated to civilian needs. The giant river fleet of the (military) Inland Water Transport, on the other hand, was never transferred to the Administration nor were its units sold locally by auction, as was the great mass of unneeded military stores. They were instead, amid storms of protest from the Civil Commissioner and 'Iraqi and British commercial interests, disposed of at Bombay by Lord Inchcape on behalf of the British Government. The civilian Tigris fleet was thereafter by degrees reduced to its pre-war scale. The Lynch (Euphrates and Tigris) Company had lost the *Julnar* and some minor craft, but in 1920 acquired the imposing *Zenobia* and *Zobaida* (both built in 1916), modernized its equipment and installations, and retained in operation the veteran *Blosse Lynch*, *Khalifa*, *Mejidieh*, and the *Malamir* from their pre-war Karun service. The Lynch management of the E.T.S.N. Company's fleet was after 1919 merged in a fusion of their interests with those of Messrs. Gray Mackenzie & Co., forming the Mesopotamia–Persia Corporation—'Mespers'—at Baghdad and Baṣra. Local competition on the river was no longer Government-organized, and most of the pre-war vessels had disappeared;[2] but it still handled an appreciable share of the traffic.

In the provincial Government, a close approximation to the Turkish administrative units was retained. The Division represented usually the former sanjaq or liwā, and the District the qaḍhā, while the nahiyas were little changed. The sixteen Divisions

[1] The mileages of metre-gauge line were: Baghdad–Baṣra 352 miles, Baghdad–Persian frontier 130, Baghdad–Kut 158, Zubayr–Jabal Sanam 23, Ur–Naṣiriya 10, Qaraghan (on the Khaniqin line) to Kinqarban (outside Kifri) 23, with 36 miles in the port area of Baṣra and Ma'qil. The standard-gauge line, Baghdad–Sharqat, was of 186 miles; the narrow-gauge, Baghdad–Kifl 21, and Baghdad–Faluja 38.

[2] The *Baghdadi*, Asfar's *Étoile de l'Orient*, the *Furat*, the *Risafa*, and a number of German-owned launches of the Société de Transports Fluviaux, had been sunk by the Turks to block waterways and impede British operations. The *Basra* was sent to Europe but did not get farther than Malta. The *Barhaniya* and *Hamidiya* were blown up by the Turks to avoid capture. The *Baghdad* reached Mosul—the first steamer to do so—and was there captured by the British.

1: Longrigg G-4, 5 (ca. 1915-1940) MH1 Iraq MH1

reconstructed, offices multiplied, and a mid-desert wireless-station was installed at Ruṭba.

Tigris river navigation did not, and was unlikely to, exceed substantially its pre-1914 scale. The pace was slow, navigation difficult and the Railway in powerful rivalry. The 'Euphrates and Tigris' fleet, managed by 'Mespers', still handled the bulk of the traffic, with its three ancient and two modern paddle-steamers (p. 111). These were increased in 1924 by the acquisition of two stern-wheelers, the *Kadri* and the *Ihsan* both built in 1918, and of the 1908-built *Baghdad*, originally owned by the Idara Nahriya. These three had belonged to the long-established Khudhayri company which was absorbed by 'Euphrates and Tigris' in 1924. A few other Khudhayri boats remained in commission, and the Royal Air Force maintained both the Inland Water Transport dockyard at Baṣra and a few vessels for their own supplies. The Port of Baṣra, administered by J. C. Ward as Port Director under the Finance Ministry of the 'Iraq Government since 1920, was still in 1926 owned by the British Government pending completion of capital repayment by instalments and the creation of a Port Trust. From 1922 onwards the Port was organized on a permanent and self-supporting peace-time basis and supplied all normal facilities both for 'Iraqi trade and for the oil-tanker fleet of Abadan. In 1923 it undertook, by a loan from the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, the dredging of a deep channel through the Fao bar which before 1920 was impassable at high water by any ship drawing more than 20 feet. The agreement provided for a channel of 28-foot depth at high water and 300-foot width, and 12 miles long. Work began in 1924, and the Rooka Channel of these dimensions was opened for traffic in 1926.

The status of 'Iraq Railways, directed by J. R. Tainsh since 1921, was similar to that of the Port: they were British-owned and after 1923 'Iraqi-administered with the aid of British executives and technicians, in anticipation of future purchase and adjustment. The Baṣra–Baghdad line was reopened in April 1921, and thereafter a Musaiyib–Karbalā extension, a line from Mafraq to the Hindiya Barrage and spurs giving access to Khaniqin and to Baṣra city were completed between 1921 and 1924. The Kut–Baghdad line, the Jabal Sanam quarry line south of Zubayr, and that from near Khaniqin to the Persian frontier at Tiaruq (Qurait) were closed in the same period. Permanent bridges were built in 1924 and 1925 at the Euphrates crossings and an extension from the Khaniqin line across the Diyalā to Kifri and Kirkuk was finished in 1925. The main workshops were brought from Shu'ayba to Shalchiya, in the western outskirts of Baghdad, in the same year. The Tigris wagon-ferry link at Baghdad between the

1: Longrigg G-4, 5 (ca. 1915-1940) MH1 Iraq MH1

were decked for road traffic, passable tracks were pushed far into the Kurdish hills. A 900-foot steel bridge over the Euphrates at Faluja was begun by British contractors, Messrs. Balfour, Beatty & Co., in 1927 and, after interruption by floods and a law case, completed in 1932. Permanent steel bridges across the Tigris at Baghdad and at Mosul were planned, and the latter well begun in 1932. A significant project was the road begun in 1927, and after remarkable engineering feats completed five years later, to connect the 'Iraqi system at Arbil with that of Adharbayjan at Tabriz. The 'Iraqi section, first used by experimental convoys in 1931, passed through the fabulous Rawanduz Gorge and was completed by the Persian section to the shores of Lake Urmiya; but its power to divert the Tabriz trade from Batum or Trebizond to Baghdad was doubtful. The close of the period saw the increased use of a direct Baghdad–'Amman route, and the first experiments in developing a pilgrim highway from Najf to Madina.

The Tigris steamers operated by the Lynch Company and their local competitors doubtfully held their own against rail, air, and road competition, and had little scope for development. The veteran *Blosse Lynch* and the *Baghdad* were sold as scrap in 1927, *Mejidieh* in 1928, and two R.A.F.-owned steamers, the *S.*16 and *S.*14 were acquired in 1927 by the Euphrates Company, to be renamed *Blosse Lynch* and *Mejidieh*; they were joined by the *Tigris* in the same year. The *Zobaida* ceased to be in commission after 1929. At Basra Port the bar-dredging operations at Fao, provisionally completed in 1926, were carried further in 1928–30. They resulted in a dredged channel—the Rooka—giving 30 instead of 28 feet of water at high tide (as compared with 20 feet in 1920) and easier movement over the inner bar. The bulk of the Port traffic consisted, as ever, of oil tankers proceeding to and from Abadan, but the Shatt was used regularly also by the Strick, British India, City, and other British lines, by the (German) Hansa Line and by an occasional ship of the U.S.S.R. or of Sweden. The new Port headquarters ranked among 'Iraq's most imposing buildings. The dredging loan of £460,000 from the Anglo-Persian had soon been repaid, and substitution of 'Iraqi for British and Indian personnel continued. Colonel Ward's Port administration, grouped as a department under Finance, was normally prosperous though badly afflicted by the slump of the years 1929 to 1932. It continued to pay to Great Britain the annual instalments fixed in 1922 as the cost of acquisition, but formation of the Port Trust then envisaged, and again provided in the 1930 Treaty, was not yet in sight.

The history of 'Iraq Railways was at this period uneventful. Their status as between British ownership and 'Iraq Government

1: Longrigg G-4, 5 (ca. 1915-1940) MH1 Iraq MH1

appointingly, carried little traffic other than some oil supplies to northern Persia. Following completion of the great Faluja bridge (p. 208) other steel bridges were constructed: on the Lesser Zab at Altun Kupri, the Greater Zab at Aski Kellek, and elsewhere. In Baghdad the replacement of the two pontoon crossings by permanent steel bridges was at last decided, and contracts were awarded to Messrs. Holloway Bros. in 1936, a major step in the development of the capital. The new spans of the Mosul bridge were finished. Municipal street-making proceeded everywhere, and not least in Baghdad.

Little changed in the field of Tigris river navigation. Fears that the Kut barrage would make steamship navigation impossible were aroused but could be allayed; a move made in 1934 by local rivals to question the rights of the Euphrates and Tigris Company led to nothing. River traffic on the whole diminished. The *Zobaida* was sold to India in 1935, the *Blosse Lynch* and *Tigris* as scrap in the same year and the *Khalifa* in 1937. In 1936 the Mesopotamia–Persia Corporation split again into its original components, the Lynch Company and Messrs. Gray Mackenzie. Four small gunboats were acquired by Government in 1937 for riverain police work, but were little used. The Port of Basra rendered steady service to the country. Its volume of traffic permitted it to pay regularly its capital instalments to the British Government, and by 1937 a debt of only £300,000 remained. The Port Trust, to be set up under the 1930 Treaty, did not appear; the Port was still administered by a Directorate under the Ministry of Finance. Its bar-dredging scheme operated with great success, repaid its loans, and kept open and improved the deep channel.[1] Two new dredgers were acquired. The Port administration completed a modern airport at Basra, furnished with a hotel and all facilities, and provided Basra city and suburbs with electric power and a modern water-supply. The ocean traffic using the Port increased substantially after 1935: first two, and later four, Japanese lines appeared, with one each of German, Indian, and Italian ownership and an occasional Russian, Swedish, and Greek steamer. The great bulk of the tonnage remained, as of old, British and British-Indian.

The 'Iraq Railways maintained their solvency and functions in spite of tribal interference, fluctuating traffic, largely obsolescent equipment, and serious road competition. The operation of the system was modernized as far as was practicable, and a rapid Baghdad–Basra daily service introduced. Negotiations with the

[1] The low-water depths in the Rooka channel (p. 208), achieved by successive phases of the bar-dredging scheme, were in 1926, 18 ft., in 1928–9, 20 ft., in 1935–8, 23 or 24 ft.

1: Longrigg G-4, 5 (ca. 1915-1940) MH1 Iraq MH1

652 the same amount at 3 per cent. interest, redeemable in ten years. The loans, regarded as experimental, were well received but too small to be of deflationary value. The Banco di Roma disappeared in 1941. The State-owned Rafidain Bank opened in the same year and handled Government accounts; by 1945 its trading began to show profit. The Agricultural and Industrial Bank developed within narrow limits during the war period, and in 1945 a division into two separate institutions, for Agriculture and for Industry, was decided, to be followed later by connected Real Estate and Mortgage Banks. The Arab Bank (of Palestine) opened a branch in Baghdad in the same year.

722 The material development of the territory, which proceeded
496 hopefully till 1941, was thereafter of necessity neglected until the end of the war. But 'Iraq was at least fortunate in that, far from a record of destruction or retrogression—the common fate of Europe—it gained considerable additions, at others' expense, to its communication system. The railway rolling stock was augmented by war-time loans from the military authorities, current maintenance was assured by military help in vehicles and equipment from British or lend-lease sources and, for a time, by numbers of imported railway workers, and problems of excessive traffic—notably in goods for Turkey and the Levant, and in grain for movement to Baṣra—were amicably handled. The military Kut-
499 'Aziziya–Ba'quba line was removed after the war. By 1945 it was possible for the Railway Directorate to plan again in terms of major development; its projects included a Baghdad rail-and-road bridge (in replacement of the old waggon-ferry), a bridge at Musayib to give access to Karbalā, a modern station and office block and new marshalling yards at Baghdad, and a sixty-five-mile extension of the line from Kirkuk to Arbil, with a Lesser Zab bridge.[1]

722 The important developments at the Port of Baṣra and its vicinity
504 carried out by military agency included wharves, sidings and approaches, storage facilities, the Shaṭṭ al-'Arab bridge, and a Ma'qil–Ahwaz railway line. Considerable parts of these additions survived the disappearance of Paiforce, though the military jetties at Umm Qaṣr on the Khawr 'Abdullah, and the railway joining these to Baṣra, were dismantled. The military control of Tigris river traffic, relinquished in 1945, bequeathed a permanent legacy of river improvement and repair facilities. With the disappearance
● 505 of military traffic, the Lynch boats and their rivals could again dispute the civilian traffic, which could not long suffice for all.

[1] Other projects studied at the time were the conversion of all metre-gauge lines to standard gauge, a Baghdad–Homs line across the desert, a standard-gauge line from Kut into Persia, a Karbalā–Najf–Kufa line, and a standard-gauge Mosul–Diyarbakr connexion. None of these materialized.

1: Longrigg G-4, 5 (ca. 1915-1940) MH1 Iraq MH1

The Lynch fleet had been diminished in 1938 by the loss of the *Mejidieh*, sold to Anglo-Iranian, and in 1941 by that of the *Malamir* and the *al-Kadri*, burnt out and scrapped respectively. Their rivals, notably Ḥannā al-Shaykh and 'Abd al-Karim Khudhayri (Khedery), were more than holding their own: but the competition of the railway and the roads must grow rather than diminish. To the road system, indeed, Paiforce contributed much, notably in the completed trans-desert highway to Jordan, in the re-surfacing of many road stretches, and in the maintenance in being of 'Iraqi transport fleets by the provision of tyres. Nevertheless, the upkeep of civil motor vehicles in war-time proved most difficult, and the numbers in use decreased. The air communications of the territory were not improved during the war; but before its end projects for a national air line were under formation. The European services crossing and visiting 'Iraq recommenced in 1945 after war-time curtailments, and the Egyptian Misr Airways restarted its Cairo–Baghdad service. A contract was given in 1945 to the Marconi Company for the erection of a new wireless transmitting station.

The course of foreign trade was notably deflected from its usual channels by the war. In 1939 the United Kingdom was its principal customer, followed by the United States, each of these countries taking approximately one-third of the total visible exports; but by 1944 the principal buyer was Palestine with Transjordan, followed by Persia. Visible exports, amounting to ID 4 million before the war, reached through enhanced prices ID 9 million before its end. The transit trade, reduced in 1939 to a value of some ID 3 million, reached ID 13 million five years later, thanks to the passage of goods to Russia. Imports rose from a value of ID 9 million before the war to ID 14 million in its last year; the United Kingdom's share in these fell from 33 to 11 per cent., that of Japan from 18 per cent. to nothing, while India's share rose from 8 to 30 per cent., Syria's from 2 to 16, the United States' from 8 to 12.

The desire for industrial expansion, always a cherished ambition, was stimulated by the war-time shortages and an increased local market; contrary factors were the shortage of raw materials, competition for skilled workers, and the impossibility of importing factory equipment. Of the seventy enterprises benefiting in 1944 from the law of 1929 most were on the humblest scale, with the importance only of pilot projects which could indicate to the middle class the possibility of a career outside Government service, the professions, or politics. Some war-time progress was made in brick manufacture; workshops produced hand-tools from scrap metal; the crushing of oil-seeds—cotton, sesame, and linseed—

1: Longrigg G-4, 5 (ca. 1915-1940) MH1 Iraq MH1

considered project; and meanwhile, Fao bar-dredging operations, designed to maintain a low-water depth of 23 feet in a substantially widened Rooka channel, proceeded throughout 1943 to 1950. But heavy floods and consequent silt movement caused serious difficulties and, the existing channel proving barely maintainable, the project of a new channel re-aligned in terms of the changed sea-bed conditions was in 1951 under close consideration. To its realization—the more necessary since 'Iraq's own oil traffic from the Zubayr field was likely to increase many-fold—the loss of the rich Abadan tanker revenue was a serious impediment;[1] but in general the future of the vital Fao channel, and indeed that of the Port in general, was under wise and far-sighted review.

The tonnage of steamers using the Port was more than half—and in some years more than two-thirds—British, with Dutch, American, Greek, Swedish, and Norwegian shipping well represented. The establishment of an all-'Iraqi Shipping Company continued to be an object of ambition among the interested and the nationally-minded, as a means of undercutting the freight rates charged by foreign lines. The post of Port Director was assumed, after two short tenures, in 1947 by Colonel G. T. Johnson, and in 1951 by R. C. Kelt. Accelerated steps were taken from 1948 onwards for the training, largely in Europe, of 'Iraqis for all posts in the administration, including the highest: an 'Iraqi Port Director was a probability of the near future.

Though transport by the 'Iraq waterways had as ever its irreplaceable part both in the lives of the riverain towns and as a main Baṣra–Baghdad artery, available traffic did not permit—as for a generation it had not permitted, save in war-time—any considerable development of the Tigris steamships. Military transport ceasing with the war, and competition by road and rail and air ever increasing, the Euphrates and Tigris Company in 1946 disposed of most of its surviving fleet, including the *Zenobia*; and early in 1951 it went into voluntary liquidation and sold the bulk of its towing-units and barges to its principal local competitor, Ḥannā al-Shaykh. The latter and members of the Khudḥayri family remained active on the river to fill the place which, after ninety years, was now abandoned as unprofitable by the Lynch enterprise.

The 'Iraq Railways, which had embarked in 1945 (p. 320) on important projects of construction, were faced also by a heavy programme of needed rehabilitation, improvement of services, and addition to rolling-stock. The five following years saw the com-

[1] The action of the Persian Government in bringing its oil industry to a standstill involved, besides its own ruin, a loss of at least £1 million a year to the finances of Baṣra Port and its dredging scheme.

6:Ireland S-5 (no date)1937 MHI Iraq MHI

British mercantile line on the Tigris[1] and for a further expansion of British commerce which, advancing far beyond the days when Basra had first been a centre for part of the Gulf trade, contributed not a little to the predominant position and influence which Great Britain exercised in Turkish Arabia. In 1911 and 1912, imports through Basra and Baghdad averaged for each of the two years, £3,100,000, of which the great proportion were British and Indian goods destined for re-export to Persia by way of Kermanshah. Exports by sea for the same years averaged £3,247,500.[2]

The transportation of practically all of these commodities was in British or Anglo-Indian bottoms, while the handling of the largest proportion of the entire river transport had come into the hands of the firm of Lynch Brothers, who from 1860 had assumed the local management of the Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company. It had enjoyed a virtual monopoly until the advent of Midhat Pasha's river service. In spite of constant interference from the Turkish authorities,[3] the company carried on a comparatively efficient service, although at high rates. It also maintained, with a Government subsidy, a line of steamers on the Kārūn River, after it had been opened by the Shah of Persia in 1888.

So strategically placed were the river valleys, so firmly was external trade regarded as a British monopoly, so paramount was British influence that British statesmen had come to regard

[1] This mercantile service was maintained from 1836 on the Tigris, ostensibly under the *firmān* (following the Arabic فرمان) originally granted in 1834 to the British Government for the operation of two steamers for commercial purposes on the Euphrates in connection with the Euphrates Expedition of that year. (Herslet, *Commercial Treaties* (1820-1925), Vol. XIII, pp. 838-9). Just how this *firmān* could be applied to the Tigris is not easily understood. Neither the subsequent one of 1842 (ibid., p. 839) nor the Vizierial Letter of 1861 (ibid., p. 845) defined clearly the rights and privileges which the company exercised and claimed.

[2] *Report on the Conditions of Trade in Mesopotamia* (Baghdad, 1920), p. 13.

[3] Other than purely political reports, the difficulties of the company with Turkish officials occupied more dispatches from the Resident at Baghdad to the Foreign Office than any other subject.

7: International Bank N, S-4 (1951) 1952 MH1 Iraq MH1

504 *Staff*

The Port Directorate has done its best to train Iraqi personnel in every level of employment. It takes time to develop the highly specialized skills required but the training process is well advanced. In May 1951 two senior and seven assistant posts of primary importance remained unoccupied in the Port Administration, and two senior and two assistant posts of the same urgency were unfilled in the Bar Dredging Scheme offices. These should be filled promptly for a period of years by qualified foreign nominees. The training of Iraqi staff members in the Port's own territory and abroad should be continued and extended as much as is practical.

In summary, the Mission's recommendations concerning the Port's development problems are:

1. The training program to overcome the shortage of technical staff experienced in port operation, administration, maintenance and construction should be continued and expanded as much as possible.
2. The dredging of the new entrance channel should be carried out.
3. Construction of a new port at Umm Qasr should not be undertaken.

II. Maritime Shipping

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The Port of Basra is extremely well served by many experienced world shipping lines. There is, therefore, no justification for the creation of an Iraq shipping line. Coastal shipping is nonexistent, since Iraq possesses only one port and neighboring countries can provide no traffic for such a venture.

III. Inland Water Transport

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Nature has provided Iraq with a number of important waterways in its two large rivers, the Tigris and the Euphrates, and their many tributaries. Until a few years ago, the Tigris, in its lower reaches in the plains, was navigable at all seasons from

7: International Bank N, S-4 (1951) 1952 MH1 Iraq MH1

above Baghdad to Basra, but this is no longer so. The variations in the flow of water are wide, floods occur at high water, there is heavy silting at low water, the river bed steadily rises and the curvature increases more and more—features typical of the behavior of rivers which remain untrained for centuries. 503

The Port Directorate of Basra has control over inland navigation. The control is nominal, however, and is limited to the Tigris between Basra and Baghdad and the Gharraf canal, a tributary joining at Kut. There is a separate budget for the purpose but it amounts to only a few thousand dinars annually, spent on navigation aids, few and far apart. The last remaining regular navigation company, the Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company, ceased operations in 1949, and only small private concerns continue to operate barges which are mostly propelled by low-powered motor launches. [505]

At the present time the Tigris between Basra and Baghdad is navigable for vessels up to four feet draught during the seven months from February to August, except for short flood periods in April and May in some years. Navigation during the remaining five months, September to January, is impeded for long periods by:

1. Low water in the Narrows in the lower reaches below Amara, for periods up to three weeks,
2. Low water at Amara, causing the floating bridge to ground, for periods up to six weeks,
3. Closure of the Kut barrage lock for irrigation requirements, for periods up to eight weeks.

Between seasons the water levels vary up to 25 feet at Baghdad, up to 35 feet south of Kut barrage and up to 7 feet at the Narrows.

Inland water transport has ceased to be a factor of importance in the country's transport system. The waters of the rivers are used primarily for irrigation and their flow is controlled only with a view to serving irrigation requirements. In the future irrigation will continue to have the principal claim on the available water supply. This does not mean, however, that a revival of inland navigation will be incompatible with irrigation. In the monograph on flood control and irrigation it has already been pointed out that measures to control the dissipation of water from the lower reaches

504 9.1 metres and is 9.7 metres by the buoys. The port has a floating crane with a capacity of thirty tons; a derrick with a capacity of eighty tons; seven general wharves, which cover an area of 13,000 square metres, are equipped with cranes with a capacity of up to eight tons and are served by the railway; and eight warehouses with an area of altogether 18,600 square metres.

According to authoritative sources, the port installations of Basra have been improved greatly in recent years by the addition of approximately 600 metres of docking space, by new cranes and more railway lines. The port of Basra is equipped with tugs and many barges and lighters; it also has a life-boat and two barges for life-saving, some divers and workshops for minor repairs. A railway links the port to Baghdad. Ma'agil has a modern airport.

The anchorage at Fao has a wooden jetty with a depth of 0.91 metres, and there is also a five-ton mobile crane and a repair shop for the dredgers.[3]

● 505 The port of Basra is in regular shipping communication with the United Kingdom, the United States, various European countries, India and the ports of the Persian Gulf. Basra is a regular port of call of many foreign shipping companies. Attempts to set up an Iraqi merchant marine have not yet succeeded.

503 Apart from the maintenance of the Ruka Channel, funds have been allocated for the purchase of new dredgers, in order to dig a new, more direct channel south of the existing one.

Inland Navigation

505 Apart from the Shatt al-Arab, which, for the purposes of navigation, is treated as being one with the port of Basra, inland navigation exists only on the Tigris, the Euphrates and on the Shatt al-Gharraf, a tributary of the Tigris, although owing to the permanent alluvial deposit the two rivers last mentioned are navigable by small sailing boats only. By contrast, the Tigris carries a lively traffic serving the agricultural region between Baghdad and Basra. As a rule, the Tigris is navigable throughout the year by vessels with a draught not exceeding 1.2 metres. The upper Tigris, between Baghdad and Mosul, is navigable by small vessels under conditions which are often difficult in the flood season.

The tonnage of Iraqi river vessels amounted to 60,000 tons in 1939 and consisted of six steamboats, numerous tugs, barges, lighters and other craft. In 1945-46, the number of river craft consisted of 181 small steam and motor boats with a total tonnage of 11,051 tons, 2,208 small vessels (including 462 barges) with a total tonnage of 149,724 tons and 312 small motor vessels for passenger transport.

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* For particulars relating to the ports of Abadan and Khurramshahr, see the chapter dealing with Iran (pp. 26-36).

2: United Nations U-4 (no date) 1950 M1 Middle East
Iraq MH1

505 In 1947, the number of steam and motor boats fell slightly to 172 vessels with a total tonnage of 10,645 tons. On the other hand, the number of special motor boats for passenger transport increased to 388.

Railways

496 The railway network and railway transport in Iraq are not yet sufficiently developed; but the authorities are making considerable efforts to remedy this state of affairs.

[471] In 1902 the Germans obtained a concession for building the Istanbul—Baghdad railway line—the "Baghdad Bahn"—a project in keeping with the *Drang nach Osten;* they began the work in 1903, but had only completed a few sections by the eve of the First World War. The work resumed under very different conditions after the First World War, and was completed in July 1940, when the Baiji—Mosul —Tel Kochek section was opened in the territory of Iraq.

[655] The Iraqi railway network, which is owned by the State, now consists of the following lines:

3:Royal Institute of International Affairs U-4 (no date)1954 M1 Middle East
Iraq MAI

491 the main roads Baghdad–Kut–Amara–Basra and Baghdad–Kirkuk–Irbil–Mosul, which are at present unmetalled or only partially metalled. The Development Board has allocated nearly ID27 million to these projects.

493 Road traffic is light. At the beginning of 1953 the number of
494 registered motor vehicles was given as follows, most of them operating in or around the larger towns: private cars 8,000; taxis 3,500; buses 2,900; lorries 6,500; motor cycles 1,900. In Baghdad an efficient bus service is operated by a State Passenger Transport Board. A private cross-desert bus service links Baghdad with Damascus, and there are private bus services between Iraq and Persia.

504 *Basra Port*,[1] lying some eighty miles up the Shatt al-Arab
505 from the Persian Gulf, is the only commercial port of Iraq; an oil port is being constructed at Fao, near the mouth of the Shatt. A small port established during the Second World War at Umm Qasr, on a sea inlet south of the Shatt al-Arab entrance, has since been dismantled. The authority of the Port, which is controlled by a special department of the Iraq Government, extends from the outer bar of the Shatt to a point seventeen miles above the town of Basra. The Shatt is sufficiently deep to admit large ocean-going vessels, but the Fao bar at its mouth requires constant dredging to clear an entrance for the larger of them. During the Second World War extensions were carried out in view of the increased volume of traffic; in consequence there are now 4,500 feet of continuous jetty, providing berthing for eight large vessels at a time and two or three smaller ones, in addition to barge and lighterage berths. Basra Port handles a large proportion of the country's trade. During 1952 some 400 ocean-going vessels, with a net registered tonnage of 1,132,000, and some 260 tankers and water-carriers, with a net registered tonnage of 927,000, were handled by the Port Authority in Basra, Fao, Abadan, and Khorramshahr. During the financial year 1951–2 cargo imported at Basra totalled 511,600 tons and
[651] cargo exported 800,000 tons. The closure of Abadan has occasioned the Port a severe loss of revenue, estimated at ID100,000 a month; port and dredging facilities have nevertheless been maintained.

502 *Inland Waterways*. The Tigris between Basra and Baghdad is navigable for vessels of up to four feet draught from February to August except for short flood periods in April and May in some years; during the remaining five months navigation is impeded for long periods. Inland water transport has lost much of its former importance. The last remaining regular navigation

[1] See *Port of Basrah*, official publication of the Port Authority.

5: Harrison D-4 (1912-1924) 1924 M1 Middle East
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BASRA CUSTOM HOUSES

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63 Simmons et al G-5 (1941-1951) 1954
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pal population centers and radiate from Baghdad and Mosul to cities in Syria, Iran and Turkey. The Tigris is navigable to barges from Basra to Baghdad throughout the year, and to smaller craft as far as Mosul during the high-water season. The Shatt al Arab is open to ocean-going vessels, and Basra, about 85 miles from the Persian Gulf, is one of the major ports of the Middle East. A government-operated railroad, part of the famous "Berlin to Baghdad" railway, runs from Basra to Baghdad and Mosul, with connections through Aleppo to Istanbul. A branch line extends from Baghdad to Kirkuk, Erbil and Khanaquin. A government-owned airline serves Iraq and the neighboring countries, while international lines from Europe to Africa and the Far East stop at Baghdad and Basra.

Food and Nutrition

The nutrition of the people is governed by the cultural habits of the different racial and social communities, the economic status of the individual families and the food supplies available under diverse climatic conditions. Undernutrition is prevalent among the poorer inhabitants—tenant cultivators, urban laborers and nomadic tribes—who make up over three quarters of the population. Wheat, barley, rice and dates are the staple food crops of the country, while vegetables and fruits, other than dates, are frequently scarce. Wheat is widely grown, primarily in the rainfall areas of the north, but also in the irrigated riverain zones of the south. Barley is cultivated extensively, and, like wheat, is used in the preparation of breads and of *burghul*, a coarse-grained cereal product typical of this region. Millet and maize are common crops in the south. Rice is produced in certain lowland districts in the Kurdish highlands and on the fringes of the southern marshes, and is a popular food among all sections of the population. Peas, beans and lentils are usually consumed throughout the year, and tomatoes, eggplant and different root and green vege-

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000 years. The infection is believed to be en-
164 zootic among the field rodents in sections
133 of the eastern and the southern provinces,
505 since outbreaks have sometimes coincided with floods which caused the rats to seek shelter in the villages. It has also been introduced on occasion by way of steamer traffic through Basra and the river towns.
164 With the exception of 34 cases, associated with a localized outbreak in the vicinity of Amarah in 1945, no instance of human plague was reported from 1937 through 1952. The 1945 outbreak started in a small village on the edge of the marshes near Amarah, in which 16 cases and 4 deaths were recorded within a period of 20 days.
164 Quarantine measures were enforced by the
744 government health organization and the Allied military authorities. DDT spraying was resisted by the inhabitants, who fled to the marshes, and the most seriously infected village was finally evacuated and burned to the ground.

In Baghdad and Basra, captured rats are often examined for the presence of plague, but rodent control is not attempted in the various cities and towns unless an epidemic is threatened. Plague-infected rats were found in Baghdad up to 1938.

164 Relapsing Fever. Both louse-borne and tick-borne relapsing fever are sporadic: from 25 to 100 cases are usually reported each year. Small localized outbreaks of louse-borne relapsing fever occur from time to time, primarily in the northern provinces. More extensive outbreaks were recorded in 1945-47, undoubtedly part of the epidemic wave which swept through the eastern Mediterranean countries in 1942-46. According to official statistics, 243 cases were treated in government institutions in 1945, 334 in 1946 and 379 in 1947, in contrast with 52 cases in 1944 and 26 to 33 in 1948-49.

Occasional cases of tick-borne relapsing fever are encountered in northern Iraq.
[134] *Ornithodorus tholozani* is regarded as the probable vector.

164 Leishmaniasis. Cutaneous leishmaniasis
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